



# An organ for the Victoria Hall, Victoria Street, Belfast

Presented in this document are newspaper items:

about the new Thomas J. Robson organ for the Classical Harmonists' Society and its organists – Dawes and **Edeson**;

about a presentation baton for the Society's conductor William Vipond Barry (1827-1872), the self-styled 'Beethoven of Ireland' who was born in Bandon, Co. Cork, and had studied with Liszt;

about a major public disturbance in the hall which threatened to damage the new organ – well worth reading! (page 12);

and also specifications of the organs in the Victoria Hall (page 5) and in Christ Church, Belfast (page 15). Plus some other related items of interest.

In this latest version of the document (1 March 2021), two appendices have been added:

Appendix 1 (page 18) with additional biographical information on Albert Dawes;

Appendix 2 (page 25) with an Australian update on **J R Edeson**.

My thanks to Alistair McCartney for first drawing my attention to the Victoria Hall pieces.

David Byers

*Northern Whig*, Tuesday 17 October 1854, page 3

### **MUSICAL TUITION.**

**MR. ALBERT DAWES,**

MUSICAL COMPOSER,

HAS THE HONOUR TO ANNOUNCE that, having been appointed Organist to the Second Presbyterian Church in Belfast, he will commence his professional duties, as Teacher, &c, on the 1st of next month.

Meantime, Mr. GREER, Bookseller, High-Street, Belfast, will receive any message for Mr. Dawes.

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*Belfast News-Letter*, Monday 11 December 1854, page 3

### **BELFAST CLASSICAL HARMONIST SOCIETY**

We are informed that the Marquis and Marchioness of Donegall and the Lady Harriet Chichester have, in the most liberal manner, given £10 each to the fund for the erection of the organ in the Classical Harmonist Society's spacious room, the Victoria Hall. They have also most graciously intimated their desire to be placed on the society's list of patrons, thus setting a worthy example to the nobility and gentry resident in this neighbourhood, whom we hope to see following their steps.

While on this subject we may mention that Mr. Albert Dawes, recently appointed organist to the Second Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, has since obtained the position of organist to the Belfast Classical Harmonist Society. We are informed that he is the designer of the large organ at present building for the society by one of the first firms in London. A more artistic production we have seldom seen than Mr. Dawes' design of the organ-case, an engraving of which, by McCracken Brothers, now lies before us; and we are sure that in Mr. Dawes' hands the interior arrangements of this beautiful instrument (particulars of which we shall give in a future publication) will be perfectly carried out. This gentleman is, we believe, in addition to being a first-rate organist, a practical organ-builder, and is at present engaged in the reconstruction of the fine old organ\* at which he presides in the Rev. John Porter's church.

\* The Stephen White organ built for Edward Bunting and the Second Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast. Elaine McClure writing in *Review*, the Journal of the Craigavon Historical Society, Vol.6, No.2 noted that '... acting on his own initiative [Mr Albert Dawes] replaced the existing pedalboard and carried out some minor improvements. The members of the Music Committee were quick to spot his endeavours and gave him a suitable reward – immediate dismissal from his post as Organist! ... Further inspection of the organ in 1857 forced the committee into sending the organ back to London for immediate and intense repairs ... [charging] the revered Thomas J Robson to carry out the necessary repairs. The organ returned to Belfast near the end of 1857, none the worse for its arduous sea voyage.' In fact Albert Dawes remained at Rosemary Street until 1857, so perhaps it took until then, and maybe a report by Robson, to reveal that Dawes's work on the organ (see next account) had not been successful.

See also lots more information about this Stephen White organ in a PDF within the **Edward Bunting** feature on this website.

*Northern Whig*, Thursday 11 January 1855, page 2

## **PERFORMANCE OF SACRED MUSIC IN THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.**

The fine old organ which has been for the last fifty years in the Church of the Second Presbyterian Congregation, in Rosemary-street, has been lately completely rebuilt, by Mr. Albert Dawes, the organist, and is to be inaugurated, by a performance of Sacred music, tomorrow evening.

The particulars are announced in an advertisement, which appears in our paper today [on page 3 of the newspaper]; and the singers connected with the Church are to have the valuable assistance of a number of the members of the Classical Harmonists' Society, so that the choir will amount to nearly sixty voices. This organ, though not of the largest size, is one of exceedingly fine construction, and is believed to have been the property of George III, having been built for his private Chapel at Windsor, whence it was removed during the alterations which were made by his successor [but see the true story on my Edward Bunting web-page!].

It has latterly been very much out of repair, and on the appointment, as organist, of Mr. Albert Dawes, who is a practical organ-builder, the Committee of the Congregation resolved to employ his services in having the organ taken down and rebuilt.

It has been completely taken down, to the floor, and entirely reconstructed, with the addition of new bellows and wind-trunks, pedals, pedal-action, and wind-chest; two new pedal pipes of large size, and two new stops, the Cremorne and Dulciana [*orig.* 'Dulciaria']. The whole of the pipes have been cleaned and re-voiced, the swell-box reconstructed, with louvre-boards, to graduate the tone, and several new couplers [*orig.* 'copulas'] added.

The pipes of this organ are exceedingly valuable, particularly the flute-stops, which are known as 'Rohr flutes', and which are only to be found in very old organs, their expense precluding them from being used in the instruments which are built at the present day.

We had the pleasure, yesterday, of being present at a private practice, and were greatly pleased with the tone of the organ, which was beautifully clear and precise, without that thick, heavy sound, peculiar to some instruments. This advantage has been obtained by the correctness with which the pipes have been revoiced. The flute and hautboy stops were peculiarly remarkable, and were heard to the greatest advantage in the Grand Concerto which Mr. Dawes played, and which is included in the programme for tomorrow evening.

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*Banner of Ulster*, Saturday 20 January 1855, page 3

## **CONCERTS, PUBLIC MEETINGS, BAZAARS, EXHIBITIONS, &c.**

THE VICTORIA HALL having been rented by the Belfast Classical Harmonists' Society for a term of years, the Committee inform the Public that this spacious building will be let for Concerts, Exhibitions, Bazaars, Balls, &c., on the most reasonable terms. The Hall can accommodate upwards of 1,000 persons comfortably; and a powerful Organ, now

constructing, will, it is expected, be erected in the Hall by the 1st of January next, and will be Let, to parties requiring it, at a moderate charge.

For terms, and all particulars, apply to

Mr. ANDREW KERNOHAN, Victoria Street.

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*Belfast News-Letter*, Monday 22 January 1855, page 2

**THE NEW ORGAN OF THE BELFAST CLASSICAL HARMONIST SOCIETY.**

**TO THE EDITOR OF THE BELFAST NEWS-LETTER.**

Sir — A short time ago I was induced to become a subscriber to the organ fund of the Belfast Classical Harmonists' Society, on the assurance that the instrument would be erected on the first of the present month, and a grand musical festival given on the occasion, for which, in consideration of my subscription, I was to receive a gratuitous ticket. Such being the fact, I was much astonished at reading in Saturday's *Banner* an advertisement from Mr. Kernohan, in which it was distinctly stated that the organ would not be erected until early in the year 1856.

Now, I consider it very unfair for a society to mislead the public in such a shameful manner — in fact, it is little else than obtaining money under false pretences, — I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ANTI-HUMBUG

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*Banner of Ulster*, Tuesday 23 January 1855, page 2

**BELFAST CLASSICAL HARMONISTS' SOCIETY.**

**TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'BANNER OF ULSTER'**

Sir, — A communication that appears in this day's *News-Letter*, signed 'Anti-Humbug', having been laid before the Committee of the 'Belfast Classical Harmonists' Society', they direct me to state that the letter has originated in a mistake, an advertisement of the Society, written in November last, stating that a powerful organ would be erected in it by the first of January next having been inserted by a printer's accident on Saturday.

They direct me also to say that the organ, owing to its great size, has detained the builder a fortnight longer than he anticipated, but that it will be erected in London on Wednesday, 24th instant. The builder then intends having some public performances to exhibit its powers for two or three days, when it will be packed and forwarded to Belfast by the end of this month, or the beginning of February, and ten days or so from its arrival in Belfast will suffice for its erection. — I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY CINNAMOND.

Belfast, January 22, 1855.

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*Belfast News-Letter*, Friday 16 February 1855, page 2

## ORGAN FOR THE CLASSICAL HARMONIST SOCIETY'S ROOMS, VICTORIA HALL.

This organ is now in course of erection in the Victoria Hall, by Mr. Robson, who has just returned from Malta, where he was engaged in putting up a grand organ in the cathedral. Mr. S.J. Noble, who performed on the instrument in London, says in a letter addressed to the organist: — 'I am very much pleased, in every way, with your organ. Mr. Robson must have taken great pains with it, from the manner it is laid out, so that, at any time, additional stops may be added. This, I presume, is one of your own suggestions, which I consider a great feature. It answers well; and, altogether, is a very effective instrument.' The last shipment of the parts of the instrument, consisting of five large cases, came to hand, on Wednesday, by the Malvina. The society intend to hold the grand inaugural concert early in March.

*Belfast Mercury*, Saturday 17 February 1855, page 1

THE VICTORIA-HALL ORGAN, BELFAST.  
**M**ESSRS. ROBSON, ORGAN BUILDERS,  
of London, being engaged in Erecting the  
LARGE ORGAN for the Classical Harmonists' Society  
in the above hall, are in a position to Tune and Correct  
any Instruments in the surrounding neighbourhood.  
Parties about to procure Organs may gain every in-  
formation by applying to Mr. ROBSON, at the Victoria-  
Hall. 323

*Belfast News-Letter*, Monday 19 February 1855, page 1

## NEW ORGAN FOR THE CLASSICAL HARMONISTS' SOCIETY

This instrument is to consist, when complete, of three rows of Manuals from CC to C and 33 stops; but the society only feel justified at the present time in finishing two sets of keys and 21 stops. The pedals are from CCC to F, the organ being tuned on a more equal division of temperament than usual.

GREAT ORGAN			SWELL ORGAN		
Compass CC to C (61 notes)			Tenor C to C (49 notes).		
		Pipes			Pipes
1	Bourdon	61	1	Double Diapason	49
2	Double Diapason	61	2	Open Diapason	49
3	Open Diapason	61	3	Stopped Diapason	49
4	Dulciana	49	4	Principal	49
5	Stopped Diapason	61	5	Flute (prepared)	
6	Principal	61	6	Doublette	98
7	Flute	61	7	Mixture (prepared)	

8	Twelfth	61	8	Contra Fagotta (prepared)	
9	Fifteenth	61	9	Cornopean	49
10	Sesqualtra [ <i>sic</i> ]	224	10	Oboe (prepared)	
11	Mixture (prepared)				
12	Trumpet	61			-----
13	Krum Horn	49			[343]
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		810			

4 Composition pedals to the foregoing.

The **Choir** organ is prepared for 7 stops.

**Pedals** CCC to F. 1 open diapason, 16 feet. 30 notes.

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## PRESENTATION TO MR. WILLIAM V. BARRY

Messrs. Gilbert, jewellers, in High Street, are exhibiting in their shop window a beautiful and costly baton, designed and manufactured by them for the members of the Classical Harmonist Society, as a present to their founder and conductor, Mr. Wm. V. Barry.

The centre portion of the baton is of Irish bog oak, beautifully carved with entwined oak leaves and acorns; at both ends there are exquisite silver mountings, elegantly chased and engraved; and the top of the baton is surmounted by a Grecian lyre of gold.

Altogether it is a really beautiful specimen of art, and highly creditable as an evidence of local skill and design.

The baton bears the following inscription: — ‘Presented to Mr. William V. Barry, by the Members of the Belfast Classical Harmonist Society, as a tribute to his musical genius, and an acknowledgment of his services as their conductor,’ The presentation of the baton is to take place at the opening of the grand organ, now creating in the Society’s Music Hall, Victoria Buildings.

[Note: the previous two items were printed in the reverse order in the newspaper, i.e. the Barry baton story immediately preceded the organ specification.]

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Does the baton still survive today?

Continued overleaf .....

**INAUGURATION OF THE NEW ORGAN IN  
THE VICTORIA HALL.  
BELFAST CLASSICAL HARMONISTS' SOCIETY.**

**PRESIDENT.**

**Lord Dufferin and Clandeboye.**

**PATRONS.**

**Most Noble the Marquis of Donegall.**

**Most Noble the Marchioness of Donegall.**

**Hon. Lady Harriet Chichester.**

**Thos. Verner, Esq., J. P., Mayor of Belfast.**

**Richard Davison, Esq., M. P.**

**CONDUCTOR.**

**Mr. W. V. Barry.**

**ORGANIST TO THE SOCIETY.**

**Mr. Albert Dawes.**

**T**HE Committee have the honour to announce that the Society will give **TWO CONCERTS**, on **FRIDAY**, March 9, at the Inauguration of their New Organ, now erected in the Society's Music Hall, Victoria Buildings, by Messrs. Robson, of London, builders of the Appollonicon.

On both occasions, Selections from the Choral Works of the great Classical and other Composers will be produced; and the celebrated **Dr. R. P. STEWART**, Organist of the Cathedral Churches of Christ's and St. Patrick's, &c., Dublin, will preside at the Organ, and will also perform a grand Piano-Forte Duett with **Mr. BARRY**.

The **MORNING CONCERT** will take place at **TWO** o'clock, and will consist of Organ Solos, Male Chorusses, &c.

The **EVENING CONCERT** will be held at **EIGHT** o'clock, when the full choral strength of the Society will be employed.

Principal Vocalists, **Miss WEBB**, and **Mr. WOOD**, of the Armagh Cathedral.

Morning Concert—Reserved Seats, 5s; Body of the Hall, &c., 2s 6d.

Evening Concert—Reserved Seats, 5s; Body of the Hall, &c., 3s; Gallery, 2s.

Subscribers of One Guinea to the Organ Fund will have Two Reserved Seat Tickets for each of the Two Concerts.

Doors open, Morning, at Half-past **ONE** o'clock; and Evening, at Half-past **SEVEN** o'clock.

Tickets and Programmes can be obtained from **Mr. COFFEY**, Donegall Place; and **Mrs. HARY**, Castle Place.

**HENRY CINNAMOND,** } Secretaries.  
**JOHN MORTON,** }

## BELFAST CLASSICAL HARMONISTS' SOCIETY.

Though a comparatively young association, this society has done more to create and foster a taste for, and knowledge of, really classical music, than any other body with which we are acquainted in the province. ...

... The inauguration of the new organ, the property of the Harmonists, in the Victoria Hall, on Friday, put the members on their mettle, and though public expectation was raised to a very high pitch, it was gratified to the fullest extent. The addition of the organ to the Hall causes it to be one of the handsomest rooms in this country, taking into consideration its extent, and it is evident that acoustics have not been neglected in the construction.

Of the 'grand instrument' itself we need say little. It is not overpowering — not thundering — in tone; but remarkable for sweetness, and the apparent ease with which it can be brought under control. To use the odd expression of an old musical friend 'it is a *delicious* instrument'. In a moderately small compass, the builders appear to have drawn upon their best resources and the result is known from the test applied on Friday.

A morning concert, even with the opening of a new organ, or with great names in the programme, is seldom largely attended; and we were therefore rather surprised, and not more so than highly pleased, to find the Victoria Hall well filled, many of the *elite* of the town and neighbourhood being present.

It may be that the name and fame of Dr. Stewart, organist to St. Patrick's and Christ Churches, Dublin — we are not sure that he is not also organist-in-chief to the Chapel Royal — may have had some attractive effect, and that Mr. Wood and Miss Webbe, of Armagh, may have had their weight; but, at all events, there was a brilliant attendance on a showery day. We find it very difficult to enter on any analysis of Dr. Stewart's superb powers as an organist. He possesses in perfection, a firm and still a flexible touch; his command of the thorough bass is wonderfully fine, and his fingering is at once enough to place him among the most marked men of his profession.

It was extremely delightful to mark the skill with which he elicited the elegant scoring of Sebastian Bach. It was quite unique in its way, and could only proceed from the hands and 'pedles' of a son of genius. Mr. Barry, the conductor, shared honours to some extent with Dr. Stewart — and, with every respect to the organist, we should say, not without some reason ...

... At the evening concert, the Hall was so exceedingly crowded, that very many were glad to escape to obtain a breath of fresh air. If anything could bear a testimony to the popular feeling regarding the Classical Harmonists' Society, this concert bore it without a shadow of error. Justice was done the performers, and the vocalists, as far as so complete a throng could do justice. But the sympathies of the multitude always run in the right direction. Most of the pieces were re-demanded, and the call was obeyed with a willingness to please, and an unstudied grace, which caused the repetition to be even more warmly applauded than its precursor ...



... We may mention that in the room was suspended a portrait of the late lamented Lord Belfast, the late patron of the society, and in other parts of the room were placed busts of Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart and Mendelssohn, the four great masters of musical art.

After the evening concert, the members repaired to Mr Thompson's, Donegall-place, where a supper, in the proprietor's best style had been prepared ...

[An address was read to W.V. Barry referring to the earlier presentation to him of the silver conductor's baton. He replied 'in fitting terms'.]

... Mr. Robson, the builder of the organ, was congratulated upon his success in producing an instrument for the society which, for beauty of appearance and extraordinary excellence of tone, was the theme of all who were privileged to see and hear it; he was also complimented upon the flattering opinion which Dr. Stewart voluntarily expressed in writing, as follows: —

‘March 9, 1855.

‘I have played upon the organ erected by Messrs. Robson, for the Classical Harmonist Society, Victoria Hall, Belfast, and I am happy to bear testimony to its excellence, both as regards the voicing of the pipes, and the freedom and accuracy with which (under the disadvantages that frequently attend a first trial) the mechanism acted. It is brilliant without harshness, and mixes well. The swell is equally effective in proportion, and the pedal diapason round and full in quality of tone. The exterior of the case is also in good taste,

‘R. P. Stewart, Mus. Doct.’

Mr. Robson was then formally enrolled an honorary member of the society, and presented with handsome insignia of membership. After a few other toasts had been proposed, the members separated, highly pleased with the success of their inaugural concerts.

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*Belfast Mercury*, Saturday 03 November 1855, page 3

### **INAUGURAL CONCERT OF THE CLASSICAL HARMONISTS' SOCIETY['S SEASON].**

The concert by this society, of which the late Earl of Belfast was president, was attended last evening by the Lord Lieutenant and suite, and a distinguished company, comprising, among others, the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor and Dromore and family, Lord Dufferin, Lord and Lady Lurgan, Lord Robert Montagu, and the gentry of the surrounding districts.

The fine concert-hall appeared to much advantage; and the excellent organ of the society, to the erection of which the liberality of the present president has largely contributed, was the principal feature of attraction and ornament. The programme comprised a selection of airs by the late Earl, with organ solos by Mr. W. V. Barry, the conductor of the society, a grand cantata from Mendelssohn, duettini and monodies, &c.

The Classical Harmonists were aided on the occasion by Mrs. Tennant (late Miss Sims Reeves), Miss Ransford, and Mr. Tennant and Herr Halle, with Mr. Barry and Sig. Monreal sat at the piano. In the ‘Lament’ Mr. and Mrs. Tennant received applause, and Miss Ransford was loudly applauded in the grand aria ‘Far, far away’, of which the words are by the Hon.

Julian Fane. Miss Ransford's singing throughout the night elicited the most general marks of approbation.

Three descriptive pieces for the piano-forte were rather more curious than engaging; and perhaps the most interesting feature in the performance of this composition was the singularly suggestive reverie of the spinning girl, the whirr of the wheel being admirably imitated.

After the first part, Mr. Sala recited the elegiac ode by Denis Florence McCarthy, on the death of Lord Belfast. The sale of the ode, we believe, will be devoted to the benefit of the library of the Working Classes' Association, and it will be sufficient to say of it that it fully bears out the anticipations which had been indulged in from the prestige of the talented author, and its pervading idea may be gathered from the motto: —

‘Swifter far than Summer’s flight,  
Swifter far than youth’s delight,  
Swifter far than happy night,  
Art thou come and gone.’

Mr. Sala's recitation was marked by a power of deep pathos and expressive tenderness which had its effect on every person who heard him.

The second part of the concert was equally successful as the first, and indeed few concerts that we have the pleasure of assisting at, where the highest vocal talent had not been secured, went off so successfully.

After ‘Rule Britannia’, which was the finale, had been sang, Mr. Pretty, vice-president of the society, and Mr. Cinnamon, hon. sec., were introduced to his Excellency by Lord Dufferin, when Lord Carlisle expressed his surprise at the precision with which so large a chorus of male voices sang together, and his gratification at seeing such a fine hall owned by the society, and so superior an organ erected by them.

Both gentlemen then expressed their happiness at the society's meeting the approbation of his Excellency, and stated that although scarcely five years in existence, the society had been enabled, by the liberality of the Donegall and Dufferin families and other friends, to erect the organ which had met his Excellency's approbation, and by their own energy also to become proprietors of the hall.

They were happy, they added, in paying this tribute to their late president and founder, to have the honour of the presence of so distinguished a nobleman, and one who occupied so exalted a position; and they could not but congratulate themselves that this was an honour never before accorded to any musical society in the North of Ireland.

His Excellency added that such societies as the Classical Harmonists' were a great credit and a benefit to the community at large. Mr. Robson, by whom the organ was built, was then introduced, and his Excellency made some inquiries as to its mechanism. The audience rose *en masse* as his Excellency was departing.

**THE CLASSICAL HARMONISTS' SOCIETY.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BELFAST DAILY MERCURY.

1, Tamworth-place, Belfast,  
January 5, 1856.

Sir, — Having seen an article in your Friday's paper respecting Mr. Barry's resignation as conductor of the Belfast Classical Harmonists' Society, which states that Mr. Barry was the cause of the organ being erected in the Victoria-hall, in a way that seems to ignore the fact of my being the principal agent in the matter, I shall deem it a favour if you will correct this error. The facts of the case are as follows: — When I came to Belfast the society were wanting an organ. I made proposals to get them one, and as they did not feel disposed to go beyond a certain sum, I gave up my commission to bring the price within the required figure; and then, as I was anxious to have an organ every way adapted for concert purposes, I took the responsibility of certain additions to my original plan, the cost of which was £60, for which the society guaranteed me certain privileges, but soon after the erection of the instrument, the committee of this society took this responsibility off my shoulders; but still, in addition to my commission being given, I gave a great amount of time to the matter in my correspondence with the builder, whom I induced to make a case from a design of my own, instead of a plain one as at first contemplated. As publicity is the only reward I have had, or am likely to have for my labours, I trust you will kindly find room to insert this note. — I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

ALBERT DAWES,  
Ex-Organist, Victoria-hall.

(The writer of the above misquotes, perhaps unintentionally, the paragraph which appeared in our columns. What we stated was 'Into all the undertakings of the society Mr. Barry entered with characteristic zeal; through his instrumentality the late Lord Belfast became its president, and for the possession of their beautiful hall and organ the society is indebted, in a great degree, to the suggestions and perseverance of their talented conductor.' This statement we understood to be the exact truth, and it is not inconsistent with that of Mr. Dawes.)

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*Dublin Evening Mail*, Wednesday 14 January 1857, page 3

The fine old organ of Hillsborough church, having been thoroughly repaired by the eminent organ builders, Messrs. Robson, of London, was re-opened on Sunday last, when the choir, under the direction of Mr. Harper, assisted by several distinguished members of the Belfast Classic [sic] Harmonist Society, sang with great precision and effect the choruses, 'The Glory of the Lord' and 'Hallelujah Chorus'.

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*Northern Whig*, Thursday 26 November 1857, page 2

**PERFORMANCE OF SACRED MUSIC.** — The organ of the Second Unitarian Church, Rosemary-street, having recently undergone very extensive alterations and improvements, by Mr. Robson, of London, was reopened on Sunday last. On Tuesday evening, Mr. Edeson, the Organist of the Church, gave a public performance of a number of pieces of sacred music, by the best masters. The organ has been entirely rebuilt and rearranged, and is now one of the most finished and effective instruments in Belfast.

[Albert Dawes had been organist of the Second Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street from 1854 to 1857. He was succeeded by John Robert Edeson (1835-1912) who also succeeded Dawes as organist of the Classical Harmonists' Society. In 1864 Edeson was appointed organist of Christ Church, Belfast. Edeson had been born in St Pancras, London. He taught music in Methodist College, Belfast 1868-1875, and the family emigrated to Australia, December 1875, where J.R. died at Collingwood, Victoria. See also Appendices 1 and 2 below.]

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*The Ulsterman*, Friday 27 November 1857, page 2 [*The Ulsterman's* editorial comment!]

The organ of the Second Unitarian Meeting-House, Rosemary Street, Belfast, has, we see it stated in the *Whig*, undergone alterations and improvements by Mr. Robson, of London. The money thus spent could have been left in Ireland; for there is an eminent organ-maker in Dublin, named Telford, who exhibited a splendid organ in the Great Exhibition of 1853.

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*Belfast Morning News*, Wednesday 23 December 1857, page 2

### **EXTRAORDINARY SCENE IN THE VICTORIA HALL, BELFAST.**

On Monday night, an occurrence took place, in the Victoria Hall, [Victoria Street] Belfast, somewhat unusual in localities of amusement. It is well known that the 'prizes' which, for several weeks past, Mr. Smith has been offering in connexion with his panorama of American scenery have created a considerable amount of excitement among large masses of the population. It was announced that Monday night would close his present visit to this town; and the consequence was, that those who had been unsuccessful in procuring prizes on previous occasions, and who felt chagrined at having paid so often and obtained only blanks, paid a farewell visit, in the hope of better success at the last hour.

The hall was crammed in every part; but, instead of Mr. Smith and his panorama making their appearance, the audience were treated to a dog-and-monkey performance. This was the first cause of the scene that ensued. Afterwards when the numbers of the prizes were being called out, those who heard that they had lost all hope of being the possessors of the gold watch — indeed of any of the thirteen prizes — began the uproar. Wherever they could lay their funds upon the prizes, they demolished them, and then they proceeded to break the seats, and to create the greatest amount of confusion.

A party made an attempt to destroy the handsome organ belonging to the Classical Harmonists' Society, but, fortunately, some members of the body being present, they mounted the platform and beat off the assailants. For upwards of half-an hour the greatest confusion existed. The female portion of the audience were in the most distressed condition, and the police force present was totally unable to quell the disturbance. After overturning all the seats in the hall, breaking some of them, and maltreating one or two of the constables, the hall was gradually cleared of the crowd, and a scene of great excitement terminated. The organ received no injury.

**Footnote:** Thomas J. Robson, 'Organbuilder to Her Majesty', was a highly respected London craftsman. Among the important instruments he built were: the Cathedral of St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, 1853 (3 manuals, 42 stops); and the Temple Church, London, 1856 (3 manuals 49 stops). In 1854, he rebuilt (in London) the Stephen White organ of the Second Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast (see the **Edward Bunting** feature on this website for more details). I've not traced the Malta organ mentioned in the *Belfast News-Letter* in 1855 (page 5 above).

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*Illustrated London News*, Saturday 19 April 1856, page 11

THE ORATORIO of the 'CREATION' was performed by the Belfast Classical Harmonist Society, in the Victoria Hall, on Wednesday evening, April 9th, being the first time it has been produced by a society in the north of Ireland\*. The soloists were Mrs. Sunderland, Mr. Benson, of London; Mr. Rogers and Mr. Wood, of Armagh; with Mr. Turle, organist of Armagh Cathedral, accompanying on the society's organ — a fine instrument, built by Robson, of London. The chorus consisted of about ninety voices; the orchestra, partly composed of members of the local instrumental society (the Anacreontic), was very effective, consisting of about thirty performers. The audience was large and fashionable, and highly appreciated the efforts of the society in producing, for the first time in Belfast, a complete oratorio.

\* Of course Edward Bunting's 1813 Belfast Musical Festival had included a major selection from Haydn's *The Creation* at the morning concert on Thursday 21 October.

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*Northern Whig*, Saturday 04 June 1859, page 2

### ORGAN FOR SALE

#### THE CLASSICAL HARMONISTS' SOCIETY.

in anticipation of the erection of the new Concert Hall, are willing to dispose of their ORGAN, at present erected in the Victoria Hall. It was built by ROBSON, of London, in 1855; contains Great, Swell, and Pedal Organs, with preparation for Choir Organ; eighteen Stops, and room for four additional, in Swell; four Composition Pedals, Couplers, &c. For further particulars, and price, apply to the SECRETARIES, 28, HIGH STREET, Belfast.

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*Armagh Guardian*, Friday 04 January 1861, page 5

### **Married**

Dec. 27, at St. Matthew's, Oakley Square, London, by the Rev. Chas. Phillips, **J. R. Edeson**, Esq., Belfast, to Jane Mary Ann, eldest daughter of W. B. Gooch, Esq., Redfern, Sydney, N.S.W.

Note: William B. Gooch was an organ-builder and the family was actually from St Pancras (as was **Edeson**), despite the 'N.S.W.' which suggests they may have emigrated to Australia – temporarily?

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*Belfast News-Letter*, Monday 02 December 1861, page 2

### **MUSIC — HARMONY AND THOROUGH BASS,**

**MR. J. R. EDESON** BEGS TO ANNOUNCE that he intends, at the request of several friends, to Open a LADIES' CLASS for instruction in that useful and important branch of Musical knowledge,

#### **HARMONY AND THOROUGH BASS.**

As grammar is to language, so are Harmony and Thorough Bass to Music. It will thus be seen how essential is the study of this branch of the art to those advanced players who wish to become proficient in the rapid reading and interpretation of Pianoforte and other Music.

The Class will be held at Mr. Edeson's Residence, 33, QUEEN STREET. Persons wishing to join will please call and enrol their names.

Further particulars on application.

Terms — One Guinea per Quarter, payable in advance.

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*Belfast News-Letter*, Monday 17 February 1862, page 2

### **APPOINTMENT OF ORGANIST TO TUAM CATHEDRAL.**

Wednesday last, the election of organist for Tuam Cathedral was held in Dublin. The choice was made in St. Matthias's Church, Adelaide Road. The candidates were unknown to the umpire, Dr. Stewart, and the decision was made from numbers, not names. Each having performed the pieces selected, the successful competitor was found to be Mr. Mason, organist of Christ Church, Belfast, and formerly of Lincoln. Mr. Mason has accordingly been appointed to the position of organist to Tuam Cathedral, at a salary of £100 a-year, and the office of organist of Christ Church, Belfast, thus becomes vacant.

\* William Mason had been a lay-clerk at Lincoln Cathedral (a male alto). He described himself as 'late pupil of Chappel Batcheler, R.A., [Royal Academy]' and gave lessons in singing, pianoforte and organ at pupils' own residences or his own at 30 College Square North. In the *Northern Whig*, 27 January 1860, page 1, he advertised: NEW MUSIC by Mr. Mason — 'Le Desir Marche', 'Beaumont-House Quadrille', 'First Waltz', &c., to be had at Mr. COFFEY'S, or at Mr. MASON'S.

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*Belfast Morning News*, Monday 03 March 1862, page 6

WANTED, an ORGANIST for Christ Church, Belfast. Salary £40 per annum. Apply to JOHN K. BOYD, Blackstaff Mill.

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*Belfast Morning News*, Friday 13 June 1862, page 3

Mr. B. H. Carroll, who for seven years has held the position of organist in St. George's, Belfast, has been appointed organist of Christ Church.

Note: In 1864, B. Hobson Carroll was appointed organist of the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, where he seems to have remained until 1888. His brother John Hobson Carroll, organist of the Second Presbyterian Church from 1847 to 1854, was organist of Down Cathedral for 15 years to 1872 and then moved to St George's, Belfast, before being appointed to Christ Church in 1875, remaining in post until a few weeks before his death in 1886. B. Hobson Carroll then returned to Christ Church before his appointment in 1892 as organist and choirmaster of Dunfermline Abbey.

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*Belfast Weekly News*, Saturday 13 September 1862, page 8

#### BIRTHS

Edeson — September 6, at 33, Queen Street, Belfast, the wife of J. R. Edeson, Esq , of a son.

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*Belfast News-Letter*, Monday 06 June 1864, page 3

#### RE-OPENING OF THE ORGAN IN CHRIST CHURCH.

Yesterday, the organ in Christ Church was re-opened for Divine service after having undergone extensive alterations. It has now been put into a state uniform with the strikingly neat appearance of the whole edifice, which, as our readers are aware, has recently been substantially and tastefully repaired. The following new stops have been added to the organ:

##### SWELL ORGAN

- 1 Keraulophon.
- 2 Fifteenth.
- 3 Cornopean.

##### GREAT ORGAN.

- 4 Double diapason.

##### CHOIR ORGAN.

- 5 Stopped diapason.
- 6 Flute.

- 7 Piccolo.
  - 8 Clarinet.
- And choir coupler.

A new choir organ has been added; new action throughout the organ has been made to supersede the somewhat antiquated action of the instrument in its former state, and the whole of the pipes have been revoiced. The composition of the organ in its present state may be described thus: —

#### GREAT ORGAN.

1	Double diapason	16 feet tone
2	Open diapason	8
3	Clarabella (treble)	8
4	Stopped diapason (bass)	8
5	Flute	4
6	Principal	4
7	Fifteenth	2
8	Sesquailtra [sic] (4 ranks)	
9	Trumpet	8

#### SWELL ORGAN.

1	Double diapason	16
2	Open diapason	8
3	Stopped diapason	8
4	Keraulophon	8
5	Principal	4
6	Fifteenth	2
7	Oboe	8
8	Cornocean	8

#### CHOIR ORGAN.

1	Dulciana	8
2	Viol de Gamba	8
3	Stopped diapason (treble)	8
4	Stopped diapason (bass)	8
5	Flute	4
6	Piccolo	2
7	Clarinet	8

#### PEDAL ORGAN.

1	Open diapason	16
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#### COUPLERS.

- 1 Swell to great.
- 2 Great to pedals.
- 3 Choir to pedals.

From the foregoing it will be seen that, for all practical purposes, the organ in Christ Church is now pretty much a new, and certainly a vastly improved one. The alterations and additions were made by Mr. J. W. Walker, of London, who also repaired the organs in St. George's and



Ballymacarrett Churches. The manner in which the work has been executed has given much satisfaction; and certainly it was shown off to the utmost advantage yesterday in the justly-admired manipulation to which the instrument was subjected in the splendid choral service selected for the occasion. ... Mr. Edeson's arduous task was performed in a manner quite in keeping with his reputation as an organist.

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*Northern Whig*, Saturday 10 September 1864, page 2

**MR. J. R. EDESON,**

(Organist of Christ Church & Classical Harmonists' Society,)

Begs to announce he has resumed his tuitions in

PIANOFORTE AND SINGING.

33, Queen Street.

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*Belfast Morning News*, Wednesday 23 August 1865, page 2

**BIRTHS**

August 18, at 33, Queen Street, Belfast, the wife of **J. R. Edeson**, Esq., of a daughter.

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*Belfast News-Letter*, Monday 14 January 1867, page 3

**BIRTHS**

**Edeson** — January 11, at 33, Queen Street, Belfast, the wife of **J. R. Edeson**, Esq., of a daughter.

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*Belfast News-Letter*, Wednesday 05 February 1868, page 2

**REMOVAL.**

**MR. J. R. EDESON, PROFESSOR OF THE**

Organ, Pianoforte, and Singing, begs to announce

that he has REMOVED to No. 7, MOUNT-CHARLES.

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Transcriptions by David Byers, February 2021

## Appendix 1



### Albert Dawes (1825-1910)

This appendix gathers together some known facts about Albert Dawes – it is not meant to be a comprehensive biography by any stretch of the imagination!

He was born on 22 May 1825, third son to Alfred Dawes, a builder [as opposed to an organ-builder!], and Maria Mary Thorpe of Boreham Street, Wartling, Battle, (see 1841 census). The road from Lewes to Battle and Hastings passes through the village of Wartling.

*The Musical World*, Vol.22, No.38, Saturday, 18 September 1847 page 607

Ryde. — Mr. Albert Dawes, (organist of Trinity Church, Ryde, [Isle of Wight]) gave a grand morning and evening concert, at the Town Hall, on Tuesday the 7th instant, under the patronage of Lord and Lady Ashley. The celebrated vocalists the Misses Smith were engaged for the occasion, and sang two new *Songs* composed by Mr. Dawes, which were *rapturously* applauded. The programme comprised many beautiful duets and trios, executed with great precision and sweetness, interspersed with performances on the *Violin* and *Pianoforte* by Mr. Dawes, who acquitted himself in a *masterly manner*, and elicited earnest and loud manifestations of delight from the audience. — *The Hampshire Independent*.

On the next page was a review of two songs, *Our Cottage Vine* and *The Bells of the Wind* [sic] with music by Albert Dawes. ‘Very pleasing ... Mr Albert Dawes had but little consideration for the quality of the voices when he wrote so many high G’s in *The Bells of the Village*. ...’

Montague Summers *A Gothic Bibliography*, 2020, page 567:

... Mrs. Reynolds also wrote a very popular song, *The Belle of the Village*: Words by Mrs. Reynolds. Music by Albert Dawes. Organist of Trinity Church. Ryde. Isle of Wight. The words had appeared in *Reynolds’s Miscellany*, and the song set to music was published at two shillings on Saturday. September 25th, 1847. ... Published at the Offices of *Reynolds’s Miscellany*, 7 Brydges Street. Covent Garden.

On 21 December 1847 at Crowhurst, Sussex, Albert Dawes married Caroline Larkin (1817-1878) who had been born in Catsfield. They had four sons and a daughter between 1849 and 1853.

*Slater’s Dictionary* for 1850 has this:

Thorney Abbey [was] destroyed in the reign of Henry VIII. The remaining nave etc. is dedicated to the Virgin and Saint Botolph and the church enlarged with a transept at the expense of the Duke of Bedford

The listing of Professional persons has:

Dawes Albert, organist and professor of music.

THORNEY — Mr. Albert Dawes, organist of Thorney Abbey, under the patronage of Tycho Wing, Esq., gave a concert on the evening of the 26th of September, which was tolerably well attended: The programme displayed an able selection of pieces, and a goodly array of executionists, consisting of twelve (principally juvenile) performers, who hold a very promising position amongst provincialists. The overture *Le Nozze di Figaro* in which Mr. W. Scotney displayed considerable energy as principal second violin, together with various waltzes, were well executed. Great credit is due to Mr. Dawes for the very efficient manner in which he brought out his music class. Mr. Elliss, principal tenor of the Peterborough cathedral, the star of the evening, was in brilliant voice, and his exquisite vocalisation, so delicate and so elaborate, so true and tasteful, astonished many who never having previously heard him, had entertained the most sanguine anticipations of his genius and skill, from the enthusiastic encomiums of his Ely patrons. Dawes's 'Our Cottage Vine', was well adapted to display the charming qualities of his voice, his tone, flexibility, and brilliant effortless execution. ...

Albert Dawes, described as a teacher of music, was living in the town of Battle at the time of the 1851 census (three years before being appointed as organist of the Second Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast). His daughter, four-year-old Caroline M. Dawes, had been born in Thorney, Cambridgeshire.

1854 – Dawes moved to Belfast for the Rosemary Street church appointment and was then also appointed organist of the Classical Harmonists' Society. He was listed in *Henderson's Belfast and Ulster Directory 1856* as living at 1 Tamworth Place, though as **Robert** Dawes!

After Belfast (after 1857), Dawes seems to have returned to his native Sussex. The *Sussex Advertiser*, Tuesday 18 October 1859, page 6, records the first meeting [of the season?] of the Harmonic Society at the George Hotel Assembly Rooms on Tuesday 11 October.

'Mr. Albert Dawes, of Hastings, presided at the pianoforte with improved skill, and the whole of the instrumentalists were in pleasing unison, and executed the pieces selected for them with the utmost satisfaction. The amateurs too were most obliging, and added greatly to the harmony of the evening ...'

In the 1861 census, Albert was living at 51 Robertson Street, Parish of the Holy Trinity, Hastings, Sussex. He was described as a 'Professor of Music and music seller'. His eldest son, Albert B. Dawes, aged 12, was described as a 'scholar and musician'.

The *Sussex Advertiser* for Tuesday 24 May 1864, page 8, details, at length, a high society wedding 'in the pretty village of Hawkhurst'. The evening festivities included a grand ball and supper. Dancing was carried on with much spirit 'to the strains of Mr. Albert Dawes' excellent quadrille band from St Leonards'.

A lengthy advertisement in *Reynolds's Newspaper*, Sunday 11 September 1864, page 4, for a new periodical, *Bow Bells*, with 24 pages, offered free coloured engravings, poetry, 'new designs of fancy needlework, obtained direct from Paris', and music. No.2 of the series promised a new ballad by Albert Dawes.

By that year, 1864, Albert had moved to 1 Queen Street, Watford, and was seeking work as a teacher and lecturer. He was also working, or wishing to work, as a tuner and repairer and salesman!

This next advertisement is from page 1 of the *Watford Observer*, Saturday 15 October 1864.

**MUSICAL TUITION.**  
**MR. ALBERT DAWES,**  
(Late Organist of St. Mark's, Myddelton Square,  
London, and formerly Organist under the Duke of  
Bedford,)  
**B**EGS respectfully to solicit the patronage of the  
Inhabitants of WATFORD and its Vicinity;  
as a Teacher of the PIANOFORTE and SINGING,  
Mr. DAWES is also open to engagements to deliver his  
Lectures on CHURCH MUSIC, &c.  
Testimonials from the highest authorities—Lay and  
Clerical.  
Organs and Pianos Tuned and Repaired. Terms  
moderate. Address, No. 1, Queen Street, Watford.  
A Handsome Semi Cottage  
**PIANO FOR SALE,**  
Compass 7 Octaves.

The *Kentish Chronicle* for Saturday 22 July 1865, page 4, reveals that Dawes was one of six candidates under consideration by the Ashford Vestry (presumably of St Mary the Virgin, Ashford) for the post of organist. Dawes was one of four with excellent testimonials as to their character and ability.

All four declared that £31 per year was insufficient remuneration. £50 was a suggested improvement. 'Mr. Dawes stated that he could [also] repair and tune the organ.'

A committee was appointed to take whatever necessary steps were considered appropriate but not to exceed £40 per year. One of the six (i.e. not one of the top four), Mr William Castle of Ashford, let it be known that he was prepared to undertake all the duties for £30 a year and requested a trial. Whichever person got the job, it certainly was not Albert Dawes.

However, at last, he was successful in finding an organist's job.

*Maidstone Journal and Kentish Advertiser*, Saturday 15 June 1867, page 2

#### LECTURE IN THE PUBLIC HALL

On Thursday evening last Mr. Albert Dawes, the newly appointed organist of the parish church, delivered a lecture upon church music, Col Warde in the chair. The attendance was, perhaps, the worst, in point of numbers, that has ever been brought together in the building, and, as the chairman remarked, was not a very encouraging prospect for a new-comer amongst them. The Westerham choir, reinforced by Mr J Shoebridge, tenor, Mr. Hicks, alto, Mr T Lawrence, bass, and master A.E. Dawes, soprano, illustrated the lecture ...

But Albert Dawes didn't seem to hold a job for any length of time.

In 1868, Dawes, 'of Westerham, Kent', was one of the four remaining candidates for the position of organist for Halifax Parish Church, to be judged by Dr Monk of York Cathedral.

*Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, Saturday 18 April 1868, page 10

The following were the articles of the contest, viz., an organ composition to be played by each candidate, the selection being left to the performer; a chorus, by Handel, the selection also left to the performer; an organ movement, to be played at first sight; a chant from a figured bass, and a psalm tune in vocal score, to be played at first sight; a short extemporaneous prelude in any key appointed by the judge. The candidates were not allowed any assistance in turning over the pages of their music, nor in the management of the organ stops. The performances commenced at ten in the forenoon, and the programme was gone through by one o'clock. At half past two the church choir assembled and sang the *Venite* and Easter Hymn, each candidate in turn accompanying them on the organ. The proceedings terminated at four o'clock, after which Dr Monk gave his judgment in favour of Mr Roberts, of Leeds [organist of Armley Church]; adding, that Mr Whitaker, of Halifax, was a very close second.

In the 1871 census, Albert was living at 1 Ranelagh Terrace, Melcombe Regis, Dorset. The only other person listed was his daughter Caroline. He was a 'Professor of Music', she was a 'Teacher of Music'. Had his wife Caroline moved away?

The *Leamington Spa Courier* for Saturday 21 October 1871, page 8, has a letter from Albert Dawes of 3 Wellington Street, Leamington full of biblical references to music in the service of the church. The italicised words are those of Dawes himself.

Dear Mr Editor. — The last letter from Mr Sponar shows such an utter ignorance of the subject on which he writes, that I as a lover of the church service, an organist, and lecturer on church service, cannot remain silent. Mr Sponar in common with all who, like himself, wish to bring everything in the church down to their own narrow-minded level, forgets, or ignores, the Old Testament's authority for a musical service. We find in 2nd Chronicles, v. 12 and 13: "It came even to pass as the *trumpeters* and *singers* were as one ...

... And now, in conclusion, may I ask why the *Ignorant* and *Unmusical* should arrogate to themselves the province of criticising, or doing away with that which they are unable to appreciate? I am quite aware that the very best music sounds the most discordant to a *bad ear*: but if those with *bad ears*, and *worse judgement*, would be a little more charv of proclaiming the *sad fact* on the house tops, it would be quite as well for their own reputation, and a comfort to the world at large. I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully, Albert Dawes.

Albert's wife died in August 1878 in Farnham, Surrey.

Then, it was the turn of Albert's business acumen to take over. The following advertisement is self-explanatory. Note how he even includes his own compositions at the end of it!

*Poole & Dorset Herald*, Thursday 23 January 1879, page 4

## MR. WILLIAM ROOKE

**I**N thanking his past and present Patrons for their warm support for so many Years past, begs to inform them that he has Disposed of his Professional and Business Interest connected with Music, as lately carried on at DELPHI HOUSE, BOURNEMOUTH, to Mr. ALBERT DAWES, who from his prominent Appointments as Organist, long experience as Teacher of Piano, Violin, &c., and from Mr. Rooke's personal knowledge of him as Successor to the late Mr. Rooke, warrants him in most highly recommending Mr. Dawes to the consideration of the Visitors and Inhabitants of Bournemouth and its Vicinity.

1st January, 1879.

## MR. ALBERT DAWES,

(Formerly Organist under the DUKE of BEDFORD, Organist and Pianist of the Exhibition, 1862, and Organist of a Leading London Church, &c., &c.)

**B**EGS to say he hopes by time and perseverance to prove himself worthy of that support solicited for him by Mr. Rooke, and as in addition to the present staff he will be assisted in all branches by members of his Family, he ventures to hope he may be able to fully and promptly attend to the requirements of his patrons.

Mr. Dawes possesses Testimonials as Conductor, Organist, Pianist, Violinist, Teacher, and Musical Lecturer, of the highest order, which may be seen, including one from his Friend, the late Composer to the Chapel Royal.

Mr. Dawes intends having an Organ Studio for Lessons and Practice.

1st January, 1879.

## DELPHI HOUSE, BOURNEMOUTH,

FOUR YEARS' SYSTEM.

*PIANOS, HARMONIUMS, AND AMERICAN ORGANS.*

(SECOND HAND), SOLD ON THE THREE OR FOUR YEARS' SYSTEM.

**T**HE New Pianofortes hired by the Aristocracy, Clergy, &c., for the Season, are returned in excellent condition, as good as new, with the advantage of being more seasoned. The Instruments are now offered at a great reduction, and an inspection is respectfully solicited by

## MR. DAWES,

Professor of the Pianoforte, Organ, Harmonium, Singing, Violin, and Thorough Bass.

## PIANOFORTES, HARMONIUMS, AND AMERICAN ORGANS.

**M**R. DAWES would direct attention to his new and extensive Stock of **PIANOS, HARMONIUMS, AND AMERICAN ORGANS**, by all the leading makers, English and Foreign, For Sale upon the Three or Four Years' System (monthly or quarterly payments), or upon the most advantageous terms for Cash.

**PIANOS, HARMONIUMS, AND AMERICAN ORGANS FOR HIRE.**

**ALL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS TUNED AND REPAIRED BY AN EXPERIENCED TUNER.**

**SHEET AND OTHER MUSIC AS WELL AS ANY ARTICLE IN THE TRADE.**

Mr. Dawes' Compositions, "Auld Lang Syne," 5s., and "Home, Sweet Home," 5s., as played at the Exhibition, 1862, and Song, "I Slept, and Oh! how sweet the dream," 2s. 6d., &c., may be had at

## DELPHI HOUSE, BOURNEMOUTH,

(ADJOINING THE TOWN HALL)



The same newspaper, the *Poole & Dorset Herald*, Thursday 23 January 1879, page 7, included a letter from Dawes – all good publicity for the new venture.

### TRINITY CHURCH ORGANISTSHIP

Sir, May I say, for the information of intending candidates for the above, that I do not intend competing for the appointment. The profession and business which I have taken from Mr. Rooke, demand so much attention that I think I shall best consult the interest of my patrons by leaving myself a rest on Sunday, to be a free worshipper instead of a servant; and having some time since resigned an appointment under the Crown, preferring quietude to prestige, I think I may be excused for wishing to rest on such laurels. But I may, perhaps, be further permitted to say that, as so many of the clergy so very properly object to lessons being given in church, I intend having an organ studio for lessons and practice. – I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

ALBERT DAWES, Successor to Mr Rooke.

Delphi House, Bournemouth, January 16th. 1879.

In January 1880, Albert Dawes married Fanny Sarah Fox (1844-??) in Christchurch, Hampshire.

In the 1881 census, Albert, a Professor of Music, was living at Delphi House, Old Christ Church Road, Holdenhurst, Hampshire. He was 56. His wife Fanny Sarah Dawes was 37. Also present was his 30 year old 'single' son, Alfred L. Dawes, a 'Music Seller'. Interestingly, a visitor was William Rooke, aged 39, a widower and described as 'Independent'.

Dawes continued to compose. This next is from the *Graphic*, Saturday 7 June 1884, page 24.



Messrs. Duncan Davison and Co. – Singers in search of novelty will find it in a very pleasant form in 'The Pride of Caer Gwent', a Wykehamist ballad; words by the Rev. W. A. C. Chevalier, music by Albert Dawes. It is really a quaint and charming composition, well worthy the attention of an intelligent singer. The compass is from D below the lines to E on the fourth space.

At some point in 1890, Dawes retired from his business.

The *Portsmouth Evening News* for Thursday 04 December 1890, page 1, carried a large advertisement for an 'Important Sale of £20,000 worth of high-class pianos, organs and musical instruments of all kinds' by G. Wallace Ash & Co., Russell Street and Palmerston Road, Southsea

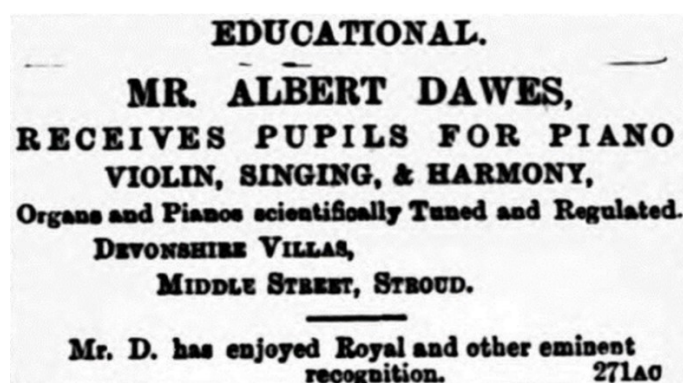
THE Large Number of Pianos purchased at the SALE of the Large PIANO SALOONS IN BRIGHTON (H. Barnes & Co), and the Purchase of so many High-Class Pianos upon the retirement of Mr. Albert Dawes, the Proprietor of the LARGEST PIANO BUSINESS in Bournemouth, together with the hundreds of Pianos and Organs returned from hire at the end of the Southsea Season have already so overstocked our Premises that an EXTENSIVE and COMPLETE CLEARANCE SALE has become a matter of necessity.

The Purchases from H. Barnes and Co, and Albert Dawes were made on such advantageous terms that G. Wallace Ash and Co. are enabled to give their Customers the benefit of buying at Prices never heard of before, and they are determined that 500 Purchasers shall be able to say, 'We have saved at least £10, and bought a Piano or organ at one-half the usual charges'.

At the time of the 1891 census, Albert, (Professor of Music, retired), his wife and his apparently unemployed son Alfred were lodging at 20 High Street, Salisbury.

Never one to give up, Alfred Dawes, now of Devonshire Villas, Middle Street, Stroud, advertised once more:

*Stroud News and Gloucestershire Advertiser*, Friday 21 July 1893, page 8



In the 1901 census, 76 year old Alfred was a visitor in the home of Charles Atherton, grain superintendent of 168 Millbrook Road, Shirley, Southampton – no other family members seem to be present. Meanwhile, his wife, Fanny S. Dawes (aged 37) was a boarder at the home of William Cleeves in Farnham, Surrey. She'd been born in Bournemouth, Hampshire. (Is there a Farnham connection between first and second wives?).

Albert Dawes died in Southampton, Hampshire in October 1910.



## Appendix 2



# J.R. Edeson – A biographical portrait

*Table Talk* (Melbourne, Victoria), Friday 7 June 1889, page 4

## A Melbourne Organist.

### Mr. John Robert Edeson.

Among the musicians of Melbourne who are working earnestly and unostentatiously for the proper understanding of their art is the popular organist of Scots' Church, whose recitals have given so much intellectual enjoyment, not only to the frequenters of the church, but to the public at large.

Mr. John Robert Edeson was born in London in 1835, and received his musical education in the choir of Lincoln's Inn Chapel under Mr. Thomas Jolley, the choir master, and made such rapid progress that at the age of twelve he became head choir boy. Here he first met Mr. J. Alfred Novello, the founder of the great musical publishing firm, and Mr. Robert Farquharson, who afterwards made such a widespread reputation as a vocalist in Australia. Both these gentlemen were bass singers, and also engaged in the choir.

After studying the piano under Mr. Jolley, Mr. Edeson severed his connection with the choir in 1849 and became a pupil of Mr. J. Hopkins, of London, for organ and harmony, under whose tuition he remained for four years, after which he succeeded the late F.E. Bache as organist of All Saints' Church, Gordon Square, London. Mr. F.E. Bache was the most promising pupil of Sterndale Bennett, and gave abundant promise of following in his master's footsteps, but his early death terminated a brief but brilliant career.

In 1853 Mr. Edeson became a pupil of Mr. W. Rea, now Dr. W. Rea, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, a pupil of Moschelles, Alexander Dreyschock and Sterndale Bennett. Mr. Rea was reputed one of the best masters in London for pianoforte, harmony and composition, and with him Mr. Edeson remained two years. After giving weekly organ recitals at the Crystal Palace in 1850, he left London the following year for an appointment in Belfast, Ireland, in which town he remained for 18 years as organist at the various churches and professor of music.

The most important appointment which Mr. Edeson held in Belfast was that of organist at the Ulster Hall, where his immediate predecessors were the late Dr. E. T. Chipp and Mr. Alfred Cellier. During Mr. Edeson's residence in Belfast he had an extensive musical connection,

and was considered one of the leading teachers; but in consequence of his wife's illness [she was from New South Wales] he was advised to seek a warmer climate for health. Thereupon he directed his thoughts to Australia, and arrived in Melbourne in December 1875. Adelaide, however, first attracted Mr. Edeson's attention, and he passed over to that city, but remained a few weeks only, as there was not sufficient inducement for him to settle there as a teacher or as an organist.

Returning to Melbourne in the early part of 1876, he was immediately engaged for the position of organist at Scots' Church, Collins-street, which he still holds. Mr. Edeson has won unqualified admiration for his organ recitals at the Town Hall, in connection with the various concerts, and has appeared as substitute for Mr. David Lee as acting City Organist on several occasions. Recently during that gentleman's illness, Mr. Edeson gave bi-weekly recitals on the Town Hall organ. His musical work in his own church, which has the finest instrument in the colony next to that of the Town Hall, has gained for him the highest commendation, for he has always striven to set before the public a repertoire of well-selected compositions.

As a teacher of music, Mr. Edeson has an extensive practice, and numbers some very promising young musicians among his pupils. During this gentleman's twelve years residence in Melbourne, he has filled the office of President of the Musical Artists' Society of Victoria, President of the Victorian Society of Organists, and is now President of the Musical Association of Victoria, and Organist of the Melbourne Philharmonic Society.

Mr. Edeson has three very talented daughters, who have already distinguished themselves in their separate branches of art. The eldest has inherited her father's talent, and is earnestly bent on winning a reputation as a musician; the second daughter is one of Mr. G. F. Folingsby's most promising pupils at the National Gallery, and can already claim excellent commendation for her pictures, while her younger sister has marked her student's career by taking the degree of M.A. at the Melbourne University.

Mr. Edeson, during his residence in London was associated at various concerts with some of the greatest artists of the day, and has accompanied on the pianoforte Madame Titiens, Madame Kundersdorff, Madame Lemmens Sherrington, Madame Edith Wynne, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. W. H. Weiss, Mr. Lewis Thomas, and others. In connection with his Australian work, Mr. Edeson was one of the organists of the Musical Festival in 1881, also of the Jubilee Festival, and more recently gave recitals on the Exhibition organ during Mr. F. H. Cowen's *regime*.